



THE CRAFTSMAN





WILLIAM MORRIS



ALTHOUGH the name of William Morris has long since become a household word throughout America, yet the personality of the man, as well as his great part in the world's work, is definitely known but to the few. His was a versatile genius, each phase of which appeals to a more or less extended public.

To students of literature he is an innovator in his art; one who introduced a new element into the Victorian age; a poet who, beginning his career as an Anglo-Norman mediaevalist, next drew inspiration from the Greek and Latin classics, and finally from widened reading, knowledge and travel, absorbed, at first hand, influences from the Scandinavians who peopled Iceland. In literature, William Morris is the enthusiastic student of Chaucer; he is the creator of "The Earthly Paradise;" the modern skald who, learned in language, legend and history, told to English-speaking folk the Great Story of the North, which, in his own opinion, "should be for all our race what the tale of Troy was to the Greeks."

For others, William Morris represents a most important factor in the progress of modern art. He was a member of that group of brilliant, earnest young Englishmen who, at the middle of the Nineteenth Century, revolutionized the national school of painting, and generated a current of aestheticism whose vibrations are still felt, not only in the parent country, but as well in America and in France. From his relations with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and from his own practical genius, Morris evolved a system of household art, which has largely swept away the ugly and the commonplace from the English middle-class home. He so became an expert in what he himself was pleased to call "the lesser arts of life." He was a handicraftsman, an artisan self-taught and highly skilled in the technical processes of a half dozen trades. He disdained no apprenticeship however humble, no labor however protracted, arduous and disfiguring, in order that he might become the practical master of his work. The attainments of his genius, of his careful and intelligent study remain as lasting witnesses to the impetus and direction given by him to the arts and crafts of his time.

Again, many who, through ignorance or prejudice, refuse to recognize the functions of literature and art in the economy of life, still regard





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William Morris as a lost leader, friend and brother. For such as these, he is the man who, by the light of history and of his own conscience, distinctly saw the evils of society as it is at present constituted; who lent his energies, his fortune and his fame to remedy the wrongs of the oppressed masses, and to prepare the advent of the reign of natural law. In William Morris all socialists honor the unprejudiced man of wealth, culture and position, who plainly formulated the proposition that:

"It is right and just that all men should have work to do which shall be worth doing, and be of itself pleasant to do; and which should be done under such conditions as would make it neither over-wearisome nor over-anxious."

Finally, above and beyond each and all of these claims of William Morris to the present and future consideration of the world, there lies the memory of his great heart which so animated all enterprises into which he entered that, at his death, a co-worker wrote of him: "Morris was a splendid leader, a great poet, artist and craftsman, a still greater man, and, oh! such a friend to know and love."

The place of Morris among the Victorian poets has been exhaustively treated by critics and reviewers, and it is well known that, at the death of Tennyson, the honors of the Laureate would have been for him an easy victory. His accomplishments in the various arts and crafts to which he successively devoted himself, have been chronicled and criticised from time to time, and in various countries and languages. But it is not generally appreciated that his art and his Socialism were associated integrally with each other, or, rather, that they were but two aspects of the same thing. However, this fact becomes evident to any one who will follow his life which, in its intellectual aspects, although it was apparently subject to abrupt changes, was, in reality, a logical expansion of inter-dependent ideas.

It is as an artist-socialist that we will briefly consider him.

The traditions of his family surrounded him with conservatism. He was born of affluent parents whose wealth increased during his childhood and youth. His father, a London City banker, gaining a controlling interest in productive copper-mines, grew wealthy beyond his own expectations, and was thus able to afford his children the most desirable educational and social advantages, as also to secure to them, at his own death, a very considerable fortune.

William Morris, the eldest of five sons, was destined for the Church, and for that reason,





was entered, at the age of fourteen, at Marlboro College, there to be educated under clerical masters. Even in these early days, the characteristics of the future artist and thinker were most marked and singular. The boy was father to the man. The lax discipline, the weakness of the school organization acted in no unfavorable way upon the scholar whose moral and physical strength gave him a unique place among the student body. Rather, these conditions afforded him opportunity for cultivating his individual tastes and for developing his peculiar powers. The school library at Marlboro was rich in works upon archaeology and ecclesiastical architecture, and through these, with his remarkable power of assimilation, he ranged at will. He there acquired that accurate knowledge, which, further developed by minute examination of all existing monuments, constituted him a great authority upon English Gothic, and, at the same time, a protector of the mediaeval cathedrals and churches against the vandalism of so-called "restorations." A school-fellow at Marlboro describes Morris as one who, given to solitude and monologues, was considered "a little mad" by the other boys: a dreamer who invented and poured forth endless stories of "knights and fairies," in which one adventure rose out of another; the tale flowing on from day to day, throughout a whole term. Another peculiarity then noticeable in him was the restlessness of his fingers. The natural undeveloped craftsman sought an outlet for his manual activity in endless netting. While studying in the large school-room, he worked for hours together, with one end of the net fastened to a desk and his fingers moving automatically. Altogether, the impression made by Morris upon his associates of those days was that of a boy remarkable for his physical force and his intense love of nature, but whose scholarship was quite ordinary, barring his intimate acquaintance with English history and architecture.

Leaving Marlboro, Morris passed under the tutorship of a High Churchman of fine attainment and character, of wide sympathies and of cultivated tastes, which extended to the fine arts. Responsive to the new influences, the boy developed into a more than fair classical scholar, and received the inspiration of the strongly individual literary and artistic work of his future years. But the decisive moment of his life occurred in June, 1852, when on passing his matriculation examination for Exeter College, Oxford, he occupied a desk next to that of Edward Burne-Jones, who was destined to be his life-long and most intimate friend. Going into residence in what he himself called the most beautiful of the ancient cities of England, the atmosphere of Oxford





became for him a forcing-place for that peculiar quality of mediaeval thought and culture, which, in his mature years, permeated his personality and vivified every piece of work, intellectual and manual, proceeding from him. Concerning the gracious influences of the old university town, he wrote late in life :

"There are many places in England where a young man may get as good book-learning as in Oxford ; but not one where he can receive the education which the loveliness of the grey city used to give us."

The impulse toward mediaevalism was further strengthened in Morris, during his undergraduate days, by a study tour through the cathedral towns of France,—notably Rouen and Amiens,—as well as by a course of reading which gained him an intimate acquaintance with Froissart and with the Arthurian legends : two wells of thought from whose inexhaustible depths he drew an endless chain of artistic *motifs*.

The development of his social and political ideas was slower and later than his advancement in literature and art. During his residence at Oxford, he saw no objection to the monarchical principle ; but yet, in the abandonment of his purpose to take Holy Orders, we may see the beginning of his revolt against constituted authority. The secularization of his mind, the widening of his interests convinced him that art and literature were not mere handmaidens of religion, but rather interests to be pursued for their own sake ; that they were no less than the means of realizing life. For a short period indeed, he had cherished the idea of founding a religious Brotherhood whose patron was to be Sir Galahad of the Arthurian legend, and whose rules should include both celibacy and conventual life. But the idea of a common organized effort toward a higher life, which had been planned by Morris and his group of associates—Burne-Jones, Faulkner and others—gradually changed from the form of a monastic to that of a social brotherhood. With the passage of years, this socialistic idea expanded in the mind of William Morris, until the feelings which he had first entertained toward a small circle of personal friends extended so as to embrace the world, its work and its interests. Then, he declared himself in revolt against existing authorities ; demanding a condition of society in which there should be "neither rich nor poor, neither master nor master's man, neither idle nor overworked, in which all men should live in equality of condition, and would manage their affairs unwastefully, with the full consciousness that harm to one would mean harm to all : the realization at last of the meaning of the word : COMMONWEALTH."





Such an evolution of thought was a direct result of Morris's study of the art and citizenship of the Middle Ages, just as evidently as his first idea of a religious brotherhood proceeded from an ardent study of the story of the knights of the Round Table. The former fact he acknowledged during the course of a debate on Socialism, which occurred at Cambridge, in 1884. His statement is as follows:

"I have come thoroughly to understand the manner of work under which the art of the Middle Ages was done, and that it is the only manner of work which can turn out popular art; only to discover that it is impossible to work in that manner in this profit-grinding society. So on all sides I am driven toward revolution as the only hope, and I am growing clearer and clearer on the speedy advent of it in a very obvious form."

The successive steps of his study and the specific accomplishments which gave him claim to the recognition and gratitude of many sorts and conditions of men are interesting and significant. His individuality and fearlessness asserted themselves in his first choice of a profession; for having received his baccalaureate degree, he sorely disappointed his family by binding himself in apprenticeship to an Oxford architect. The gravity of this action can not now be appreciated except by reference to the spirit of the times. The wealthy upper middle classes regarded the men following artistic pursuits as Bohemians: the painters being lowest in the social scale, and the position of architects even being questioned.

At the present distance of time, and in default of documentary evidence, we can not determine whether it was the archeological, or the artistic faculty in Morris that led him to the choice of a profession. But it would seem to have been the instinct of the born decorator, who understands the relative values of construction and ornament, and who knows that he must first build and afterward beautify. It would seem also that in so choosing, Morris vaguely felt that by force of his commanding intellectual, moral and personal influence, he was destined to redeem and to elevate the then denationalized English decorative arts.

The apprenticeship of Morris as an architect lasted only nine months, but during that time, with the great gift of concentration which characterized him, he gained a knowledge of both principle and detail which would have required a long laborious application from an ordinarily gifted person. His attainments as a builder were never put to extensive practical use, and even on planning his first home, in 1859, the "Red House," at Upton, County Kent, he employed the services





of his friend and fellow-student in architecture, Philip Webb; although the latter did little else than to carry out Morris's directions, especially in the design of the interior and its furnishings. The Red House proved to be an epoch-making building. It is remarkable as being the first example of the revived artistic use of red brick in domestic architecture. "The Studio" has referred to it as "that wonderful red building which became the prototype of all the charming houses of the so-called 'Queen Anne' revival; although it may be said in passing, that it is almost entirely Gothic, with a strong French influence apparent." Finally, it is known that the household decorative arts for which England became so famous in the latter part of the nineteenth century, grew out of the desire of Morris to provide a suitable home for his lovely bride, and his avowed effort to make that home the most beautiful dwelling-place in the kingdom.

Through the exercise of his ingenuity in mural and ceiling ornamentation, in embroidery design, and in other artistic mediums, he acquired practical experience as a decorator. And from these beginnings grew the work which engaged him from that time forward until his death. The activity consequent upon the planning and furnishing of the "Red House" followed upon a mood of idleness, not infrequent in Morris's youth; but with the coming of the new interests, the tendencies of earlier years disappeared. The eagerness of the maker, the joy of craftsmanship seized him, never to relax their hold. And the dreams of a monastic Brotherhood which had been the constant accompaniment of his Oxford days, evolved into the definite idea of a company of artists pledged to produce beautiful things.

Such was the origin of the firm of Morris & Company, which, beside the chief who devoted to its success his extraordinary talents, his time and his fortune, included among its members other men of genius and great attainment: Madox Brown, whose high place in English painting stands to-day acknowledged; Dante Gabriele Rossetti, who united in himself the incongruous qualities of the idealist, the artist and the astute financier; Burne-Jones, who did most to perpetuate and ennoble the English Pre-Raphaelite tradition; Philip Webb, the builder, as we know, of the "Red House," the master of proportion and ornament, whether as applied to the larger masses of architecture, or yet to small objects of interior decoration; and finally Faulkner, less gifted artistically than the others, but who was a forthright craftsman, a valuable associate as an expert accountant, and whose loyalty and longing for his friends had drawn him from his mathematical tutorship at Oxford to take up the restless life of London.





It is certain that no other such firm has ever been organized ; since it was composed of Oxford graduates of distinction, and artists of already high reputation ; since, also, its commercial object was wholly subordinate to the interests of art. The main employment of the Company was, at first, ecclesiastical decoration, as the so-called aesthetic revival was then in progress among the London churches. This movement, which was entailed by the vigorous study of history made by the High-Church party, created a demand for mural decoration, stained glass, tiles, carving, metal work and altar-embroideries, all of which, by reason of the peculiar talents and tendencies of Burne-Jones, Morris, Brown and Faulkner, could be most intelligently supplied. In the decade 1860-1870, the Morris firm executed windows for Salisbury Cathedral, and for certain of the College churches at Oxford and Cambridge ; which works are to-day objects of pilgrimage for those interested in the modern revival of one of the most beautiful of the arts of the Middle Ages. At the same time, very successful experiments in tapestry-weaving and cabinet-making were in progress, as may be learned from the report of the jury of awards at the International Exhibition of 1862. This report, referring to the objects of household art shown by the Morris firm, declares that "the general forms of the furniture, the arrangement of the tapestry, and the character of the details are satisfactory to the archeologist from the exactness of the imitation, at the same time that the general effect is excellent."

It is needless to trace the development of the Firm at length ; since the results of its work may be measured by any one who has the means to compare the household art of England and America, as it stands to-day, with the ugliness and barrenness of the upper and middle class homes of those countries, forty years ago. But it must be remembered that to the Firm capital, invention and control were supplied practically by Morris alone. His architectural instinct, the quality in which lay his unique strength, built up the material fortunes of the Company from the merest financial nothing, at the same time that it assured the complete aesthetic success of the enterprise by carrying the arts of design to their highest form.

As the desire for beautiful surroundings spread from ecclesiastical into secular life, the call for increased and diversified production made heavy demands upon Morris's time, strength and financial resources. But his energies and his spirit of self-sacrifice never failed or flagged. He was always persistent, sagacious and industrious. In order to revive the arts and crafts which so beautified the otherwise strenuous life





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of the Middle Ages, he made the most practical and costly experiments in dyeing, weaving and printing. In the exercise of the first of these crafts, he supplemented all that could be learned from books and from chemical tests in his own vats by a thorough apprenticeship among the dyers of Staffordshire. And the results of his labor justified the means which he so ungrudgingly employed; for he succeeded in raising to an unexpected degree of beauty, the art which, since the introduction of the anilines at about the middle of the nineteenth century, had fallen into deplorable decline. As a colorist, Morris takes rank among the great masters. He followed the best traditions of Oriental art; using but few elements and obtaining his effects by skillfully varied juxtaposition and contrast. His system of color has been somewhat misunderstood by both buyers and imitators; for the peacock-blues, olive-greens and rusty reds dominant in the stage setting of "Patience" and other satires upon the "Aesthetic Craze," were simply provisional colors used during the early years of the Firm, and set aside by the establishment of the Morris dye-house, where full frank hues of indigo blue, madder red and weld yellow were perfected, and employed in the production of the beautiful Hammersmith carpets and Merton tapestries and chintzes.

In textile fabrics the progress made by Morris was no less sure and rapid than in the art and craft which we have just considered. His appreciation of necessities and how to accomplish them was alike in all fields of practical work. His attainments in the weaving of tapestry are especially remarkable and characteristic. He criticised the Gobelins Factories as having degraded a "fine art" into a mere "upholsterer's toy," and therefore set himself to revive the craft. In default of any existing instance where the actual weaving process might be observed, Morris gathered details, as best he might, from an old French official handbook, published prior to the Revolution. He caused a handloom to be set up in his own bedroom at Kelmscott House, Hammersmith, and, in order that the new interest should not interfere with his ordinary occupations, he was accustomed to practise weaving in the early morning hours. He so gradually became an expert workman, and even devised technical improvements upon the French historical system. Indeed, he may be said to have restored the splendid and almost extinct art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This statement is justified by the beautiful works in arras: "The Star of Bethlehem," and the series illustrating "The Quest of the San Graal," designed for the great dining-room of Stanmore Hall, near Harrow.





A third art,—that of printing,—to the practice of which Morris devoted much time during the later years of his life, would seem at first to be removed from the sphere of the pure decorator. But we find the secret of this devotion in the words of the artist himself: "The only work of art which surpasses a complete mediaeval book is a complete mediaeval building." And hence we realize that here again the architectural instinct provided impulse and energy. As Morris had realized early in life the impossibility of raising buildings worthy to compare with mediaeval structures, and had found the cause of such impossibility to lie in the adverse circumstances under which the modern workman is compelled to labor, deprived of pleasure in the work of his hands, so the great-hearted reformer and artist set himself to remedy the wrong, and to restore the lost pleasure to the worker. His architectural studies led him to Socialism, and when his hopes of effecting great improvements in the economic conditions of his country passed away, he was thrown back upon his own resources to impress his convictions upon the world. So the establishment of his printing-press at Kelmscott Manor, coincides with his withdrawal from active Socialism.

Again, his power of quick absorption and assimilation made him a past master of the craft, in which he was also aided by his previous hand-illumination of favorite poems, and his studies in wood-engraving. The Kelmscott Press created printing as a fine art in England and America, popularized good design in book-covers, and produced a series of beautiful books, the finest of which, the great folio edition of Chaucer, was a tribute of Morris to the literary guide and master of his youth.

In the full activity of his labor as printer and publisher, death overtook him; but not before he had drawn the portrait of the ideal handicraftsman, in whom we recognize his own likeness.

"The true workman," he says, "must put his own individual intelligence and enthusiasm into the goods which he fashions. He must have a natural aptitude for his work so strong that no education can force him away from his special bent. He must be allowed to think of what he is doing, and to vary his work as the circumstances of it vary, and his own moods. He must be forever stirring to make the piece at which he is at work better than the last. He must refuse at anybody's bidding to turn out,—I won't say a bad,—but even an indifferent piece of work, whatever the public wants, or thinks it wants. He must have a voice, and a voice worth listening to, in the whole affair."





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The production of this skilled handicraftsman was, in Morris's belief, an ideal not beyond realization. His system was that of setting the nearest person to do whatever work needed to be done. He preferred general intelligence to innate manual dexterity. He inveighed against that excessive division of labor which cramps and sterilizes the modern artificer. He demanded a knowledge of drawing as the basis of all manual arts and as an essential element of a general education which should be worthy of the name. In a word, he sought to unite the artist and the workman in one person, and thus to prevent the making of designs which the designer can not produce with his own hands.

Although the artistic principles of Morris have been questioned, it is acknowledged that personally he made them successful. In his own case, he did not divorce practice and theory; since to his immense production of designs,—which in textile fabrics alone numbered more than six hundred,—he added the experience of a thorough craftsman. Furthermore, he did not allow his own interests and occupations, absorbing and exacting though they were, to blind him to the larger questions of the hour, in which he could be of service to his country, his century and the world; as is evidenced by his action and prominence in the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, and by the fearless enthusiasm with which he disseminated Socialistic propaganda. He laid down no empty formulas, and like his master Chaucer's "Poure Parson," first he wrought, and afterward he taught. As we have before said, his art and his Socialism were one and inseparable; for he entered upon his political course blankly ignorant of economics and in the effort to make possible for the workman "a life to which the perception and creation of beauty,—the enjoyment of real pleasure that is,—shall be felt to be as necessary as daily bread." Like Karl Marx, he seemed to believe that the relations of man to man have formed an ascending evolutionary series, developed through the successive organic periods of history, and that they are now undergoing a last crisis, at whose end, these relations having been those of master and slave in the ancient republics, lord and serf in the Middle Ages, capitalist and laborer in the nineteenth century, shall ultimately, under the happy reign of Socialism, become those of brother and brother.





THE SEVEN LAMPS

THE singular and non-committal titles given by Ruskin to his lectures and books are still a frequent subject of comment among well-informed persons. For although they are always pertinent, yet their relations to the subject-matter are not such as would be readily perceived even by the careful and the imaginative. They are elaborately prepared, and the work of a scholar, who drew them from ancient, or mediaeval sources of history, philosophy or language. Among the most attractive and appropriate of these titles is that of "The Seven Lamps of Architecture." To explain it, we must go back to the great Jewish symbol of Light and Law: the Menorah, or seven-branched candlestick, which is so sacred and significant in the history of the Hebrews, and which acquired a new value when it was associated by the historic Church with the rite of baptism; coming then to signify the acceptance of the illumination and of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

This figure, as was most natural, attracted Ruskin, for whom art was ever a faith and a religion. He adapted and extended its meaning until it stood in his mind for the perfect expression of the builder's art, wherein lay, as in the solar spectrum, seven distinct but harmonious elements.

These elements, lamps, or spirits, as he variously names them, are familiar principles treated in Ruskin's own superlative way.

The Lamp of Sacrifice would seem, if reduced to its lowest terms, to be that spirit of self-denial and self-forgetfulness which is felt by the true artist or craftsman, who sinks his personality into his work, and works not for gain, or even fame, but solely to express in visible form what his brain has conceived.

The Lamp of Truth is that spirit of honesty in building which resists falsity of assertion in the nature of the material used, and the quantity of labor exercised.

The Lamps of Power and Beauty represent the constructive and decorative elements in architecture: the first showing the power of the human mind to gather, co-ordinate and govern principles discovered at large; the second imitating and reflecting the loveliness found in Nature: as for example, the Gothic system of ornament which is based upon plant-forms.

The Lamp of Life is the expression of vital energy: the impress of the mind of the master left upon his work.

The Lamp of Memory is the





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creative spirit of all truly great architecture: that is, the monumental, which conquers the forgetfulness of men by perpetuating the story of some great cause, leader, or victory.

Finally, the Lamp of Obedience is a wise observance of fixed principles which results in enduring work; it is the opposite of that license which builds but for a day, and is the slave of its own vagaries.



The title of the "Fors Chari-gera" has proven itself a crux to many. And this not without reason, since the work is numbered among the later writings of Ruskin, and is much less easy of access than the "Lamps" or the "Stones." It is a series of letters addressed to workingmen, and first published periodically; the series beginning in 1871. The imaginative title was suggested to the master from an old print, and is ingeniously explained by him at the outset. "Fors Chari-gera is the Fate who bears the club, key or nail:" the instrument representing strength, as the club, or nail, and wisdom as the key; the whole device symbolising the guiding or compelling forces of human life.

The "Aratra Pentelici" is a treatise on the principles of sculpture: the title attracting the lover of ancient art by its suggestions of the soil of Greece, teeming with the splendid remains of antique beauty, and with the marble which hides within itself lovely conceptions denied to all save the creative artist. "Aratra Pentelici," the plough of Pentelicus, is a title of which the imaginative power sustains the interest of the reader as he turns the pages of a somewhat technical and quite dogmatic argument.

An equal power lies in the choice of the descriptive title: "The Laws of Fesule," which points to the mountain suburb of Florence as to the generating-point and focus of the Italian renaissance of art.



"The Queen of the Air" is an exposition of the Greek myths of cloud and storm; while "The Ethics of the Dust" are a series of lectures upon crystallization. Other semi-scientific writings bear the titles of "Proserpina," which is a study of wayside flowers; "Deucalion," the name of the Greek representative of the biblical Noah, applied by Ruskin to his own observations upon the lapse of the waves and the life of the stars; "Frondes Agrestes," boughs from the fields,





are extracts selected from "Modern Painters" by the author himself. And so it would be possible for us to pass on through a literary product of three hundred works, everywhere met by suggestions of that fertile chaos of ideas and impulses which represent for us the most unique personality of Victorian England.





UTILITY--SIMPLICITY--BEAUTY

THE owner of a new house often hesitates before the task of providing it with furnishings. He must, he believes, make sacrifices in one of two directions. Either he must allow the claims of beauty to usurp those of utility, and so detract from the essential qualities of his home; or he must content himself with surroundings less attractive than those of his neighbors. If he chooses the objects which he regards as beautiful, he fills his rooms with slender tables, chairs and seats, delicately constructed, perhaps charged with marquetry, and almost invariably covered with easily perishable fabrics. If, on the contrary, he decides to purchase serviceable things for everyday use, he too often acquires a collection of articles ugly in form, crude and impure in color, and the very sight of which induces depression and melancholy.

To avoid these results he has first to learn the wholesome lesson of simplicity. The home, assuming, of course, that it represents the station of its occupants, should never be encumbered with things of doubtful use, or questionable aesthetic value. The few articles necessary for the maintenance of comfort, habitual occupation and the healthful enjoyment of the senses, are the only ones to be admitted into living, bed, or dining rooms. Further, old things are best, since they have been tried and proven and not found wanting. That is: objects not such as satisfied customs and fashions which are now obsolete; but such as represent primitive ideas and therefore essentials; such as frankly state their purpose and honestly meet the needs which they were intended to supply; doing this without affectation of crudeness, and with regard to modern consideration for comfort and sanitation.

If we take, for example, the bed as often now modeled with a view to decorative effect, we shall find it raised on a dais and surrounded by heavy draperies; both of which features are relics of a past time, serving no useful end, and contrary to modern ideas of cleanliness and health. The dais and the draperies formerly protected the bed from cold and dampness, and it is most interesting to note the development of this idea of isolation, from the cupboard beds of the Brittany peasants up to the great couch of the French sovereigns. The model of the bed best suited to the present time, when the value of pure air and the curative power of sunlight are fully recognized, is no derivative model. It must simply show solidity, simplicity, and a due regard for sanitary principles.

And so we might pass on through the list of household furnishings; condemning with justice those that copy and imitate; those that are wanting in honesty and originality; as when, for instance, a chair intended for constant use, shows the slender proportions of the style Louis Seize; or again, when decoration simulates constructive principle, as in the introduction of false mortices that fasten nothing; or when a certain combination of curves or angles appears throughout the work of a designer, until it loses all meaning, and becomes for the eye, what the refrain of a nursery rhyme is to the ear.

If then these essentials of utility, that is: adaptability to purpose, and simplicity be assured, beauty will not be slow to





follow. The necessities of construction demand a sufficient variety of line to satisfy the aesthetic cravings of the eye for pure form ; while the delights of color wait upon the use of our native and scarcely appreciated woods. It would seem that the American craftsman might receive, as addressed to himself, the words of our patriot poet, when he wrote :

" That is best which lieth nearest,
Shape from that thy course in art."

